

LANDMARK



SURVEY

IDENTIFICATION

Street Address: 503 West Main Street
 Map and Parcel: 32-175
 Census Tract & Block: 1-308
 Present Owner: Timothy Reilly
 Address: 503 W. Main Street
 Present Use: Beauty School
 Original Owner: J. D. Paxton
 Original Use: Residence

BASE DATA

Historic Name: Paxton Place
 Date/Period: cir. 1824
 Style: Federal
 Height to Cornice:
 Height in Stories: 2 1/2
 Present Zoning: B-3
 Land Area (sq.ft.): 52 x 210
 Assessed Value (land + imp.): 9460 + 2430 = 11,890

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

This Federal detached house once stood on spacious grounds on the rural road that linked the University with the downtown area. It is a very good example of houses built in Charlottesville around 1825 and is similar in form to the Livers House at 1211 W. Main St. The two story structure is laid with a Flemish bond front terminating in the typical mouse-tooth brick cornice. The two interior chimneys on the western side of the house are connected by a curtain, characteristic of this period. The lunette window in the garret of the western wall is identical to that at 1211 W. Main. The triangular wooden door and window pediments are very similar to those at the Carter-Gilmer House. Its plan is unusual in that it was a side hall and three rooms deep accounting for the deep, shallow pitched roof form which allowed spacious garret rooms. Except for window and door architraves, the interior has been removed. A handsome late 19th century pressed tin ceiling is in the entrance hall.

HISTORICAL DESCRIPTION

Alexander reported a "handsome brick residence owned and occupied by John C. Wood, with the beautiful flower garden around it, was, we learned, built by a Presbyterian clergyman, when the University was being erected, by the name of Paxton". Paxton bought 33 acres in 1824 for \$3,035 from John Kelly, and probably built the house shortly thereafter. In 1854, J. D. Paxton sold the house and 1-1/2 acres of land to Melinda Digges (ACDB 52-385). In 1868 Mrs. John C. Wood purchased it from Mrs. Digges, and the deed referred to the property as the "Paxton Place", (ACDB 63-529). The house has had many owners and has served as the Shisler Funeral Home and the Loyal Order of Moose Lodge. In 1960 the present owner Thomas Watson purchased the property.

SIGNIFICANCE

This is a fine example of the Federal style popular in the early 19th century. There are many similarities between this house and the one at 1211 West Main.

CONDITIONS

Good

UTM: 17/720450/4212020

SOURCES

Alexander, Recollections, p. 108
 City/County Records
 Mr. Thomas Watson